

The Critic and Good Literature

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Have We "Forty Immortals?"

TO THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE:

France has her Academy—her 'Forty Immortals,' about whom *The Century* has recently told us so much. Why then should not the United States have a similar institution? Have we not forty living men-of-letters whose names would honor such an Academy? I myself am sure we have, and I should like to get the votes of other readers of THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE on this subject. Will you kindly constitute yourself a ballot-box for the election? BOSTON, MASS., Feb. 23, 1884. H. O. W.

[We shall be glad to act as a ballot-box in so good a cause. To those who desire to cast their votes, we would say that our correspondent's idea is, to get from each of them a list of the names of the forty American authors of the sterner sex whom they deem most worthy of a place in a possible American Academy. The representatives of all branches of literature should, of course, be included—historians, poets, playwrights, novelists, scientific writers, theologians, etc. The voting may be continued throughout the month of March, and in the issue of THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE of April 5 we will give the result of the count. Names should be written plainly, on only one side of the sheet, and the lists should be sent in as early as possible.]

A Scotch Trait or Two.

I SUSPECT I am more strongly attracted by the Celt than by the Anglo-Saxon; at least by the individual Celt. Collectively the Anglo-Saxon is the more impressive; his triumphs are greater; the face of his country and of his cities is the more pleasing; the gift of empire is his. Yet there can be no doubt, I think, that the Celts, at least the Scotch Celts, are a more hearty, cordial and hospitable people than the English; they have more curiosity, more raciness, more of what Whitman calls the 'fluid and attaching character.' They fuse and blend readily with another people, which the English never do. In this country John Bull is usually like a pebble in the clay; grind him and press him and bake him as you will, he is still a pebble—a hard spot in the brick, but not essentially a part of it.

Every close view I got of the Scotch character confirmed my liking for it. A most pleasant episode happened to me down in Ayr. A young man whom I stumbled on by chance in a little wood by the Doon, during some conversation about the birds that were singing around us, quoted my own name to me as having said so and so in *The Century*. This led to an acquaintance with the family and with the parish minister, and gave a genuine human coloring to our brief sojourn in Burns' country. In Glasgow I had an inside view of a household a little lower in the social scale but high in the scale of virtues and excellences. I climbed up many winding stone stairs and found the family in three or four rooms on the top floor: a father, mother, three sons,

two of them grown, and a daughter, also grown. The father and the sons worked in an iron foundry near by. I broke bread with them around the table in the little cluttered kitchen, and was spared apologies as much as if we had been seated at a banquet in a baronial hall. A Bible chapter was read after we were seated at table, each member of the family reading a verse alternately. When the meal was over, we went into the next room, where all joined in singing some Scotch songs, mainly from Burns. One of the sons had the finest bass voices I had ever listened to. Its power was simply tremendous, well tempered with the Scotch raciness and tenderness, too. He had taken the first prize at a public singing bout, open to competition to all of Scotland. I told his mother, who also had a voice of wonderful sweetness, that such a gift would make her son's fortune anywhere, and found that the subject was the cause of much anxiety to her. She feared lest it should be the ruin of him—lest he should prostitute it to the service of the devil, as she put it, rather than use it to the glory of God. She said she had rather follow him to his grave than see him in the opera or concert hall, singing for money. She wanted him to stick to his work, and use his voice only as a pious and sacred gift. When I asked the young man to come and sing for us at the hotel, the mother was greatly troubled, as she afterward told me, till she learned we were stopping at a temperance house. But the young man seemed not at all inclined to break away from the advice of his mother. The other son had a sweetheart who had gone to America, and he was looking longingly thitherward. He showed me her picture and did not at all attempt to conceal from me, or from his family, his interest in the original. Indeed one would have said there were no secrets or concealments in such a family, and the thorough unaffected piety of the whole household, mingled with so much that was human and racy and canny, made an impression upon me I shall not soon forget. This family was probably an exceptional one, but it tinges all my recollections of smoky, tall-chimneyed Glasgow.—A Scotch trait of quite another sort was briefly summarized in an item of statistics which I used to read in one of the Edinburgh papers every Monday morning, namely, that of the births registered during the previous week. Invariably from ten to twelve per cent were illegitimate. The Scotch—all classes of them—love Burns deep down in their hearts, because he has expressed them, from the roots up, as none other has.

When I think of Edinburgh the vision that comes before my mind's eye is of a city presided over, and shone upon as it were, by two green treeless heights. Arthur's Seat is like a great irregular orb or half-orb, rising above the near horizon there in the southeast, and dominating city and country with its unbroken verdancy. Its greenness seems almost to pervade the air itself—a slight radiance of grass, there in the eastern skies. No description of Edinburgh I had read had prepared me for the striking hill features that look down upon it. There is a series of three hills which culminate in Arthur's Seat, 800 feet high. Upon the first and smaller hill stands the Castle. This is a craggy, precipitous rock, on three sides, but sloping down into a broad gentle expanse toward the east, where the old city of Edinburgh is mainly built,—as if it had flowed out of the Castle as out of a fountain, and spread over the adjacent ground. Just beyond the point where it ceases, rise Salisbury Crags to a height of 570 feet, turning to the city a sheer wall of rocks like the Palisades of the Hudson. From its brink eastward again, the ground slopes in a broad expanse of greensward to a valley called Hunter's Bog; thence it rises irregularly to the crest of Arthur's Seat, forming the pastoral eminence and green-shining disk to which I have referred. Along the crest of Salisbury Crags the thick turf comes to the edge of the precipices, as one might stretch a carpet. It is so firm and compact that the boys cut their initials in it, on a large scale, with their jack-knives, as in the bark of a tree.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

Reviews

The Queen's New Book.*

THE critics have done one service for the Queen's book: whoever reads it after reading the criticisms will be surprised to find how good it is. Such a book, to be judged fairly, must be taken with consideration for the double standpoint from which it was written: first, the standpoint of what the Queen deliberately proposed to do in writing it, and secondly, the standpoint of what she would not be able to help doing from the training which produces second nature. In regard to the first, nothing is more evident than that the Queen did not publish her book from a craving for literary fame, or from a belief that her work was in any way remarkable; but because she believed it would give pleasure to her 'loyal Highlanders,' and because she was willing that the light in which it would place her before the world should be that of being 'but yet a woman.' It is conceivable that she felt, 'It is expected of me to be great and good and wise; to have "views," and to understand the papers that I sign; but it is not expected of me, as a Queen, to love my husband, or cherish his memory, or look after my children, or appreciate my servants; and I should like people to know of me that I do.' The very name of her book should be a sufficient reply to those who have objected to the strong personal element through a long course of years in which so many great public events have happened: it is intended merely as a record of what a humbler author might have called 'vacation experiences.' Had she mingled politics at all with her record, and then made the personal element pre-eminent, the world might have wondered; but the entire absence of all politics leaves us to consider that public matters have been set aside for separate consideration. There is not lacking in this an element of good taste, as if she had realized that her position, while one of great dignity, is one of absolutely no responsibility, and that since she is in reality far more the servant than the Queen of her people, it would hardly be graceful to state 'views' and 'policy' that were far more theirs than hers.

From the second standpoint, we must overlook the curiousness of such expressions as 'I and my children,' and the mention—odd, certainly, to democratic ears—while she was visiting the Duke and Duchess of Argyll in their own house, 'The Duchess dined *with me* in the large dining-room.' Even that element which is certainly over-conspicuous in the Journal—but which, by the way, is not a peculiarity of Queens—the chronicle of every 'restless night' and every drinking of 'a little tea about six o'clock,' would be not unnatural from one whose loyal subjects insist on having it telegraphed from Windsor or Balmoral every time that she walks on the terrace. This is the element which the kindest critics have hedged about with the title of 'naïve simplicity' and which the unkindest have not hesitated to pronounce 'silliness.' We shall range ourselves with the kindest, and say that the 'naïve simplicity' of the book has, on the whole, been very charming to us. Even to say of the book that it is only interesting from being a Queen's is higher praise than would appear from the mere words; because things *are* interesting in a Queen that would not be interesting in any one else. If we do not all dearly love a lord, we all dearly love to hear about lords; the very reporter, who impertinently told poor old Brown that he had 'as good a right to be there as the Queen,' was 'there' for the express purpose of finding out all he could about the Queen; if she had left, he would have left, and followed her if possible. So when the Queen mentions with frequency that she has had a 'nice breakfast,' we are all interested; not surprised, of course, that a royal breakfast should be 'nice,' but pleased to find that fifty years of royal breakfasts have not dulled the royal perception of their being 'nice.'

The simplicity is so perfect that we hardly realize our being among crowned heads till we come across some such sentence as this: 'Passing close to the "Osborne," we saw Bertie, Alix, the boys, and the King of Denmark standing on the paddle-box;' or when, after describing some pleasant people at a dinner, she mentions casually that one of them had been once 'my minister to Persia.' Sometimes it is very touching, as when at the 'Unveiling' she remarks: 'When I had arrived, there was no one to direct me and to say, as formerly, what was to be done!' Of course, it is carried too far; quite too far when we are told how Prince Albert would have relished the roast chicken at the duchess's dinner, and when everybody has his adjective of 'dear,' or 'dearest,' or 'poor,' or 'sweet' till the adjectives are cheapened to meaning nothing at all. When we see it mentioned that 'Good Sharp was always present in the dining-room,' it becomes necessary to refer to the foot-notes to see whether 'Good Sharp' was a duke or a servant—a chaplain or a governess. He proves to be a dog. Yet it is to be remembered that this is not the silliness of a silly woman, but the foolishness of a fond one. The silly woman would have been one, who, from her position of no political responsibility, should have chosen to write grandiloquently of 'my' views, 'my' army and navy, 'my' policy, 'my' plans, 'my' accomplished facts. It is surely no small thing to be able to say that there is not an unkind word in the book for any one, and that the only instance of womanly narrowness is in the evident readiness to consider 'so applicable to France' certain passages from Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos and the Psalms, read at service after one of the German victories.

As for poor Brown, we really think he is made more of in the reviews than in the book. The allusion after his death is certainly rather tremendous, and one fails to see why, during his lifetime, the Queen was always so surprised to find Brown doing his duty. Apparently it was more remarkable to her that Brown should actually wait at table when he was told to, than that her Light Brigade should obey orders at Balaklava. But it is to be remembered that what she did for Brown there was no one else to do for him; she could safely trust the world to appreciate her Light Brigades, her dukes, her ministers, her poets; but who would say that Brown was faithful if she did not? Nor was Brown exceptionally regarded; he is mentioned oftenest, because oftenest in attendance; but although he never fails to be 'vexed,' or 'so horrified,' or 'distressed,' whenever the Queen is, it is to be noted, too, that all the maids are 'full of feeling,' that Grant is 'overcome' and somebody else 'so grieved;' and after all, is there not something very touching in the fact that fifty years of royalty, in a household where her lightest word is law, where even an invitation from her is a command, have not yet taught this gentle Queen to accept a glass of water from a menial without considering the service a favor?

Casting aside all standpoints, and judging the book as a book *per se*, there are many good things in it; bits of scenery not less vivid than some of yours, O brilliant descriptive essayists, for being briefer; little pictures of royal life, as that of the visit to Blair, when the 'poor Duke' stood, trembling with illness, to give her the white rose always presented by the Lords of Athole at the Sovereign's visit; and little pictures of the humblest Highland life, the simple christenings and funerals, the 'juicing' of the sheep, the shearing, the observance of Halloween. Occasionally there is a pathetic anecdote, like that of the poor woman who had lost husband and children, and who when asked how she had borne it, answered: 'When *he* was ta'en, it made sic a hole in my heart that a' other sorrows gang lightly through.' There is a pretty story, too, of an old woman who exclaimed, catching at the hand of the Princess Louise, when the Queen came to visit the Duke and Duchess of Argyll: 'Oh I tell me! what shall I say to her?' And whatever lack of literary art may be shown, it is to be remembered that no

* More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands. 25 cts. New York: Harper's Franklin Square Library.

literary art is anywhere attempted, and that in the curious jumble about distress and boxes in the paragraphs devoted to the death of the Prince Imperial, high literary art, under the circumstances, would have been as cold-hearted as the present lack of it is striking.

In brief, we can honestly say of the book that it is one to give the simple pleasure which was all that the royal author expected it to give, while at the same time it deepens our respect and sympathy for a Queen who, through fifty years of sovereignty, has retained simplicity; who has learned from fifty years of absolute deference to herself to be deferent to others; and who has not yet learned, after fifty years of absolute sway in her household, to accept any service as a matter-of-course.

New Editions of Tennyson.*

IT WAS NOT by poems like 'The Cup' and 'The Falcon,' (1) that Alfred Tennyson earned his wreath, or My Lord his coronet. A born singer, the sweetest of his day, and honored as such by all his race, he might well have stayed his hand when the capstone of his temple of song had been laid; but a dramatist he would be in spite of his stars, and in his new character he threatens to become the Vandal of his own fame. It is ten thousand pities, and yet—what did he in that galley? It is a poor, sickly fruit that November finds unripened; and we may well doubt the genuineness of the dramatic impulse which has been so long in coming.

'The Cup' is dramatic in form but not in feeling. It was played at the Lyceum in London some three years back, and our readers will doubtless recall the newspaper summary of its plot. The story, indeed, is meagreness itself; the elements of suspense, of surprise, are altogether wanting; so too is that sense of solemnity, akin to religion, akin to pity, which the catastrophe of a tragedy should inspire in almost equal measure with the presence of death itself. How poor and feeble are the last words of the heroine, Camma, who seems to hear—stale device—her murdered husband calling, and dies exclaiming

"Camma! Camma!" Sinnatus! Sinnatus!"

Compare with this lame and impotent conclusion the simple sublimity of the dying Hamlet's 'The rest is silence!' or Othello's masterful 'And smote him—thus!' Again, what bathos is the parting remark—one cannot call it apostrophe—of Synorix to Camma, who has given him poison:

'Thou—coming my way too—Camma! good-night!'

To which Camma replies, in true Old Bowery style:

'Thy way? poor worm! crawl down thine own black hole
To the lowest Hell!'

Neither in delineation, language, nor construction does the poem rise above mediocrity, and mediocrity from Tennyson is unpardonable—a sin against light.

'The Falcon,' which is a dramatization of a story from Boccaccio, is far more pleasing. The Count Federigo has impoverished himself by his gifts to Lady Giovanna, who refuses his proffered love. He would starve, indeed, were it not for the game which his pet falcon captures. One morning his lady comes uninvited to breakfast; the larder is empty, and Federigo causes his falcon to be killed and dressed for the meal. Touched by this last proof of her lover's devotion, Giovanna relents, and the pair are wedded. The humor of the piece is of the mildest, but the modesty and noble simplicity of Federigo's nature are well portrayed.

Messrs. Macmillan & Co.'s one-volume edition of Tennyson (2) is all that can be desired for cheapness and convenience. The binding is neat, the type clear, and with the exception of an excellent portrait there are no cuts. The edition does not profess to be a complete one, but there is little of value omitted. All, or nearly all of the suppressed

poems which are now restored have, however, been published in this country. Chronological order has not been entirely followed, but some attempt at classification appears to have been made. The addition of a few notes would seem to be the only improvement one could suggest.

Looking back over Tennyson's career, the fact which strikes us most is the even excellence of all he has produced since the appearance of his third volume. The year 1851 marks approximately the period of the poet's maturity, and that glorious triad of poems, 'The Princess,' 'Maud,' and 'In Memoriam,' represent to our thinking the consummate flower of his genius. But if after 'Maud' there is less flame, there is no less heat; in 'Rizpah' and 'The Revenge' the singer of 'Locksley Hall' gives no sign of 'childish treble.' We could well spare the dramatic poems, indeed, for another 'Oenone' or 'Tithonus'; but after all, Tennyson has earned the right to nod. The loss of his works would make an irreparable gap in English literature. Few poets can be named in whom fervor and sanity, passion and purity have been so happily tempered. It is as yet too early to speak of his rank in the eyes of posterity. It may be that his style will be found too labored for the coming generation; for though form is essential to the immortality of verse, artificiality is fatal to it; and the obsolescent phrases for which Tennyson's genius has regained currency may not be destined to survive him. Of this point we are unable to judge, dazzled as we are to-day by the poet's nearness; but perhaps this over-refinement may prove to be, to quote himself:

'The little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.'

But if the lyrics from the 'Princess' are not destined to survive, the old order of taste will have changed indeed.

"English Poetesses."*

IT IS NOT often that an author feels constrained to apologize for his title; perhaps we should not say that Mr. Robertson apologizes when he observes, 'Ladies who write verse nowadays do not care to be called "poetesses";' yet, as they have not had the wit to find a better designation for themselves, the name must serve, etc. The afore-mentioned objectors are likely to be reconciled much sooner to the offensive title than to the line of argument used by the author to demonstrate the impossibility of their attaining the first rank in poetry. Both the quantity and quality of the verse produced in the present day by women he finds to be quite remarkable, while he concludes that the more their work is brought into comparison with that of men, 'the more completely is the case made out against them.' Nevertheless Mr. Robertson's able advocacy of the losing cause, in his subsequent pages, leads us to forget the unfavorable postulate with which he started out; for his sketches of Englishwomen eminent in letters are generally characterized by clever discrimination, humor, and kindness of spirit. Ample and tasteful selections are made from the writings of each, and much is added in the way of amusing anecdote and the literary gossip of the time. So considerably do the individual histories of these famous women involve the social history of their day that we are no less impressed by their womanly influence than by their authorial powers. Those who have not the student's opportunity to acquaint themselves with the curious and rarer literature of old English time will owe the author a special debt of gratitude for his biographies of 'Matchless Orinda' (morning-star of the women-poets) and that elfin genius the Duchess of Newcastle. Very pleasantly retold is the story of the Thrales and their ursine lodger, whom his much-enduring benefactress regarded as 'a mind great beyond the comprehension of common mortals, and good beyond all hope of imitation from perishable mortals.' The lives of Mrs. Barbauld and

* (1) *The Cup, and The Falcon*. \$1. (2) *The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet-Laureate*. \$1.50. New-York: Macmillan & Co.

* *English Poetesses*. By Eric S. Robertson. \$1.50. New-York: Cassell & Co.

Mrs. Opie are invested with fresh interest; and the pages devoted to Scotch songstresses are among the best of the book; while the pictures drawn of the household life of Charles and Mary Lamb are as charming as any to be found in the already extensive portraiture we have of those gifted unfortunates. Mrs. Hemans's excellences are duly noted, and 'L. E. L.' is wittily granted to be, of the two, the more like Sappho, in the matter of 'leaving us less to read.' If we are not altogether content with the author's estimate of Mrs. Browning, we may reflect that no characterization of her genius is wholly satisfactory.

It was Mr. Robertson's original intention to give 'some detailed notice of every considerable English poetess now alive.' That he did not do this is not so much to our regret, considering the weakened quality of his style and his judgments in the few biographies he has written of authors still living. We are at a loss how to interpret such comment as the following: 'Mrs. Emily Pfeiffer has made more bids for the highest place among women-poets of the day than any other; but it may be questioned whether she attains to that place.' If this be the language of eulogy, it is not of the happiest order. Again, in the phrase 'the cultivated sections of the reading public,' we can scarcely suppose that any allusion to tillage and agriculture is intended, though the verbal suggestion is strong. While we entertain a high opinion of Miss A. Mary F. Robinson's poetic abilities, we do not find ourselves capable of the interest taken by the author in the fact that when this young lady, on her twenty-first birthday, was offered her choice between a 'ball given in her honor or the publication of some of her poems,' she 'promptly' chose the latter privilege. Most young women devoted to the service of the Nine would have made the same election.

"The Storied Sea."*

'THE STORIED SEA' is much more than a pleasantly written book of travel: it is vivid, varied, refined and tender; it sparkles with light and color. We mean nothing derogatory when we call it emphatically a woman's book. Since women have given us some of our very best literature, it may be a compliment to recognize the woman's touch—airy yet strong, brilliant yet with reason—as we find it in such sketches as 'Doing a Little Shopping,' 'The Light of the Harem,' and 'The American Girl.' It is a pleasure to find anybody acknowledging that 'the young American girl is the sweetest thing created since the evening and the morning were the first day,' and although Mr. James meant to convey the same lesson that Mrs. Wallace does, people did not understand him as they will understand her, because her Daisy Miller is a little more refined.

A strict regard for truth compels us to note also traces of the opposite kind of woman's touch: there are, for instance, altogether too many 'darlings' in the book, and the affection for the reader is too unreasonable. Nobody 'loves' his readers: it is the reader who loves the author. And the sketch of 'The American Girl,' much as we like it, seems in singular taste when we learn that it is not only founded on fact, but is a *portrait*; especially when we remember that the uncle of the portrait was considered at first by the author as 'a well-meaning idiot.' The author tries to disarm criticism by declaring that she does not write for the critics, but for weary schoolmistresses and tired mothers. We should think, however, that the schoolmistresses would be the last to need the story of Regulus and Hannibal's rings from the field of battle; and as for the tired mothers, really the martyrdom of Polycarp, the sufferings of prisoners, the cutting off of ears and shaving off of eyelids, do not seem exactly cheerful topics for a rest. The tired mother and the schoolmistress will need the critic, if the author does not, and we commend to them heartily the 'Little Shopping' and the 'Harem.'

* The Storied Sea. By Susan E. Wallace. Boston: J. R. Osgood & Co.

"Vestigia."*

WHAT is it that we expect as we take up a new book by the author of 'Kismet' and 'Mirage' and 'The Head of Medusa'? It will be interesting; it will be fine; it may or may not be true to nature, but it will assuredly be true to art; it will be picturesque, full of color, yet with sudden sentences pregnant with thought or suggestion,—and we shall like it. Nor is the critic who feels a warm glow of pleasure at the prospect disappointed in the result. 'Vestigia' is hardly a novel, being a short story that might almost be called a sketch, were it not for the elaborate care that has been given to the powerful subject. Here we have, indeed, all the exquisite workmanship, the careful selection of a subject, the literary conscience, that we looked for; and in addition we find an unexpected fund of humor, supplied by an old sailor who is a Mrs. Poyser in his way. We may briefly state, as by no means insignificant praise, that the author knew when she began what she meant to do, and that she did it, and did nothing else. What she has accomplished is a lesson to two authors whom we think of, with very different methods: to Mr. Black, in showing the moral of secret societies far more effectively in one chapter than he does in ninety-seven; and to the author of 'Guenn,' in proving that local color does not depend upon the number of pages for its effect. The plot of the little story is simple, original and pathetic; its moral is one to give great satisfaction to, let us say, the author of 'The Breadwinners,' in its suggestion that no one so hates Brotherhoods as a sensible man who has joined one in an unhappy moment, though he may not always be willing to confess it. It would be impossible to do justice to old Drea, the Mrs. Poyser of the story, in single quotations. We need only say that he gives just the lighter touches necessary to heighten the tragedy, and plays no small part in the artistic effect of the whole.

"Health at Home."†

THIS is one of the most interesting, sensible, and suggestive little books of the kind that we know of. It gives new facts which are entertaining to read, and reasons for every suggestion, and the authors apparently have no hobbies, since they acknowledge that the temperature of the bath, or of the chamber at night, or the amount of sleep, and similar questions, *ought* to be regulated by personal preferences and temperaments. We notice, it is true, a profound unconsciousness, in the suggestions for a medicine chest, of any possibility that anybody could want a homeopathic one, and an aversion to stimulants which we like in itself but which goes too far in merely mentioning in an aside that whiskey is said to be useful in case of rattlesnake bite, the remedies first suggested being a ligature and sucking of the poison. In reality—and we have an intimate acquaintance with a rattlesnake country—whiskey is the remedy; the ligature and the sucking may be good—we are glad to know of them and should try them, too—but, first and immediately, whiskey! It is said that the effect of the poison is not merely to vitiate the blood, but to make it coagulate, an effect counteracted by whiskey. Of course if the ligature and the sucking succeed in eliminating the poison, all is right; but the danger that they will not eliminate quite all makes one more ready to try counteracting than removing. Here, however, is precisely one of the practical suggestions which we have praised: we are told that sucking the poison can in no way injure the person who sucks it; for even if it were not immediately rejected from the mouth, no harm comes to the blood from snake poison thus introduced into the system. As one of the facts which we have spoken of as interesting, we may quote at random the statement that if the thumbs and great toes of every person were cut off, the whole race would become extinct in a few generations.

* Vestigia. By George Fleming. \$1.95. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

† Health at Home. By A. H. Guernsey and Irenæus P. Davis, M.D. 60 cts. (Appleton's Home-Books.) New York: D. Appleton & Co.

Minor Notices.

BLESSED be the man who can say anything briefly, especially if it be history! We are extremely pleased with the plan of 'Barnes's General History' (A. S. Barnes & Co.) from the moment that we see its simple definition of history as the 'record of what man has done.' The idea is to give the briefest possible statement of historical facts, with the fewest possible dates; the result being that each fact is luminous with importance and clear as light itself. We advise the anxious mother who is in the habit of hiring her daughter to read Prescott, Motley or Gibbon in vacation, and the young ladies who are meditating some such penance by themselves for the Lenten season, to take this book instead. It gives all that ought to be given in the way of the backbone of history for the beginner, and it supplies all that the most ardent historian needs, in 'topics' to be investigated by reference to a great number of authorities, including novelists and poets, a list of books applicable to each subject being given. Moreover, paragraphs only intended to be read give insight into the manners and customs, the civilization and daily life, of all countries and all times, and the illustrations are very fine, both in choice of subject and in execution.

'AMERICAN COLLEGES,' by Charles F. Thwing, second edition (Putnam), is a compilation of all possible statistics with regard to the three hundred colleges of the United States,—expenses, pecuniary aid, societies, fellowships, journalism, etc., with an elaborate statement of the courses of study in each, which we should think very helpful for reference in case of doubt as to the choice of a college. We question, however, that any such classification as the following is practically possible: 'The typical Yale graduate is ready and thorough; the Harvard, exact and full; the Amherst, patient and earnest; the Williams, well-rounded and well-balanced; the Dartmouth, independent; the Middlebury, careful and discriminating; and the Michigan, direct and clear.' We also fear that the compiler's enthusiasm runs away with him, when in chronicling the advance in opportunities of late years, he states that no one now pretends to call himself thoroughly educated 'unless he reads, writes, and speaks these languages (French and German) with fluency.' We have yet to see the American college graduate who has learned to speak and write with fluency any foreign language with merely the aid of his Alma Mater. An interesting chapter in the book goes far to prove that college graduates, and those who have stood high at graduation, have been the great men of the country.

THE ISSUE in a new and cheaper edition of that classic Japanese story of valor and personal loyalty, 'The Loyal Ronins,' will be welcomed by many who desire to read or possess the fascinating literary curiosity. Mr. Edward Greey, the American translator, has added an appropriate new preface, from which we learn that the story, in whole or in part, has found its way into five European languages. Mr. Shiuichiro Saito, the Japanese translator, has, since the first edition was issued, returned to Japan, made a visit to Corea, and is now an official in the foreign office in Tokiō. With profuse illustration in native style, with spirited text in short chapters headed by a snatch of the poetry of Nippon, and set forth in a worthy dress of wide-margined paper and blue and gold-stamped binding, we commend this true story to a new set of readers. It is a faithful mirror of feudal Japan. Though a tragedy, it has those touches of wit and pathos which show how well Tamonaga, the Japanese author, understood the lights and shadows in his countrymen's character. At this very moment, we doubt not, fresh camellias stand in the grave-stone sockets, and incense-sticks smoulder before the tablet-tombs of the forty-seven ronins (feudal retainers) who even in death surround their lord with deathless devotion. Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, the publishers, assist the translators to keep their memory green.

'DUE WEST, or Round the World in Ten Months,' is the plain matter-of-fact record of Mr. Maturin M. Ballou, the compiler of no less than three collections of other people's thoughts about women and pretty much everything under the sun. The book before us is best described by its avoirdupois (a pound, or less), dimensions (8 x 5), and number of pages (387). The paper and binding are excellent, since Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. publish it, and have done their work well. It is just the sort of book for libraries that are filled by measurement, and will be useful to any who wish to see the world through the eyes of a Gradgrind. Of course there are many interesting things in it,

and to read it through will inform one liberally; but in these days one is able to take his choice in books of travel, and the stern law of the survival of the fittest is a really merciful one to buyer, reader, critic and all people, we think, except those who read gazetteers and dictionaries through and enjoy the task.

Forty Days on a Camp-Chair.

WITH the incoming of Lent,—when the last echo of Delmonico ball-fiddles has died upon the air,—when the dancers go into retreat, and the florist pales his ineffectual fire,—then does fashionable New York betake itself to a protracted sojourn (interrupted only for the purposes of eating, drinking, and church-going) upon those instruments of torture known to man as camp-chairs. The antiquity of these temporary props,—attested by the historians of Louis XV., who depict that drowsy monarch and his complaisant queen seated in arm-chairs to witness the theatrical performances of La Pompadour, while the Dauphin and Mesdames occupied 'des pliants' (folding-chairs) behind,—may entitle them to our respect, but not to our affection. Some years ago, while the vexed word 'culture' was still a thing unknown in our social vocabulary, camp-chairs were only to be had by applying to those grim functionaries who preside over the ceremonials of our latter end. An undertaker's wagon would deliver them at our doors on the eve of a drawing-room lecture, or a juvenile party where magic ruled the hour. But now that the token of camp-chairs in one's house has become an outward and visible sign of mental elevation, they have increased in numbers until their makers threaten to be the millionnaires of the future, as hoop-skirt manufacturers were the rich men of the immediate past.

It may be interesting to point out some of the many enticements to temporary sojourn on a camp-chair. To the lot of one frequenting the highways of metropolitan society, there falls an endless variety of opportunities. He is solicited by this or the other enterprising hostess, to come to her on Wednesday for Professor A's charming lecture on sociology, on Thursday for Mr. B's beautiful reading from the original Greek, on Friday for Mrs. C's delightful recitations, on Saturday for an essay on Icelandic music illustrated by a quartette of natives in costume. The readings and recitations so dear to contemporaneous New York are generally held in the afternoon and are affairs of morning-dress; in other words, an occasion for women to swarm and congregate, while a few helpless-looking men haunt the doorways, or find refuge in the dumb-waiters of an overcrowded house. Daylight is excluded, and the scene is lit by many candles and lamps with rosy shades. The spaces behind a little table allotted to the speaker are embowered in palms, and the air is heavy with the scent of violets and lilacs. Over the little table is, perchance, a map or explanatory diagram, and upon it a Venetian goblet and flagon of water; for thus luxury walks hand-in-hand with familiar science. The rooms, elsewhere denuded of their garniture, are filled with camp-chairs, row on row, receiving brave thin ladies and fearsome fat ones, until the place is packed to suffocation. A ripple of chat swells to a murmur; the murmur to that shrill colloquial cackle peculiarly our own. This hubbub is mercifully silenced by the voice of the lecturer, but at the first convenient interval it revives. Comments upon the day's discourse are interspersed by oracles on clothes, or croup, or crockery, the last engagement, or the rival operas.

In addition to the afternoon symposia on camp-chairs, there are many clubs, meeting, also at private houses, in the evening, to hear familiar talks, with debate by experts, on a wide variety of subjects. Art and literature, science and dogma, poetry and the drama, pig-iron and harbor defences, ballad-making and Buddha, the land-question and abuses of the brain, Rubens and rose-culture, the higher education of women, and how to make sauce Béchamel, have been duly discussed by the various gatherings for social improvement held during two seasons past. At the evening meetings, one sees many men, the older ones clean-shaven, correctly garbed, bored, patient. They join the silent company on camp-chairs, because their wives and daughters have instructed them that it is meet and right so to do. The younger male members of the company stand in serious rows on the outskirts of the crowd. They are portentously grave, careful of their dignity, conscious of their collars, caressing with complacent gaze their spotless waistcoats. Nowhere does the unconquerable sadness of the true society man find such opportunity for display as at one of these literary stances. Wit fails to move him, for like Congreve's Lord Froth, he thinks 'there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh.' 'Tis such a vulgar expression of the passion!

Everybody can laugh. To be pleased with what pleases the crowd! Now when I laugh, I always laugh alone!

Among the women, there is more active interest. Looking over the crowd, we see their faces, bright, sympathetic, rapt, as a general thing, sometimes puzzled, occasionally resentful, but rarely unresponsive to the speaker. When there is question of an intellectual tilt, a wordy war, be it even between but two dry-as-dust professors, women are all agog, for they dearly love an argument. Let the combat rage as it will, they will never cry, 'Thumbs up!' When the lecture is unduly long, there is compensation in the fact of a pleasant, restful time, during which, unlike the hours spent in Lenten services at church, it is quite proper to take mental notes of a neighbor's dress. We are told of one young lady who, recently, during a fifty-minutes' discourse on abstractions before a fashionable club, improved her opportunity to master the intricate convolutions of trimming on her rival's gown, and was subsequently able, by a brilliant *coup*, to transfer the knowledge so acquired to her own millinery artist, in time to reproduce the fashion at a biology class, next day.

Novel Writing by Recipe.

TO THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE :

Mr. James Payn propounded, some time ago, certain entertaining ideas regarding the profession of letters, including the flattering theory, concurred in by Anthony Trollope in his *Autobiography*, that any reasonably clever man who would might be a novelist. He hinted that novel writing is a profession—or perhaps his word was 'trade'—to which the youth of average talent might be bred with as fair a chance of success as attends his suit of any liberal calling. He admitted that he may well add to the ample equipment of general information with which Englishmen have the enviable fortune to be born, a knowledge of history, politics, and natural science; but these are merely desirable, not indispensable, the only *sine qua non* being patient assiduity. In other words, there is an accepted way of making a novel, as there is of making a pudding, and one may learn it almost as readily. It is a generous fancy, and obviously renders the production of fiction one of the most alluring occupations to which the mind of youth can turn—particularly when one adds Mr. Payn's amiable prophecy of the competency to result from the pursuit. I wish that he had gone further in the instruction of the young man who is to make novels by recipe. Apparently he is to purchase his simple tools—paper, pens, and ink—and proceed to blacken paper. Mr. Payn leaves him to discover the proper way of making a novel from his blunders. It would have been kinder to have furnished him with such general suggestions touching fiction-cookery as his own experience has suggested. Novel writing is as easy as cooking, let us say; but surely cookery is an art, and has at least a few general and many particular formulas. Mr. Payn stopped short at the critical point. He should have written the cook-book.

On the whole, I do not know why such a volume should not be written. It might be called 'The Novelist's Cook-Book,' and it should give the ambitious scribbler recipes for the novel analytic, the novel sensational, the descriptive novel, the novel Trollopian, the novel scientific, the historical novel, and for whatever unclassified varieties the author of the work might discover. It would become the novelist's *vade mecum*, and would be made especially useful if prefaced by a kind of primer containing a 'Recipe for all Novel Making.' The dishes resulting from its use might not solicit the palate of the epicure; but clearly in these days all the novels cannot be written for the epicures. An immense product of fiction of one sort or another has become the real need of a large class, and if, without pretence to the refinements, it might be made upon some workmanlike system, it would be gratifying to the growing company—chiefly women, of course—of those who read many novels, and would be glad if, on the whole, it were easier work. These people do not expect a masterpiece of cookery every day; they are aware that all novelists cannot be *chefs*; but it seems only fair that the subordinates, on Mr. Payn's theory, should be more skilful cooks.

The 'Novelist's Cook-Book' would only give, like the other cook-books, a brief statement of the general method to be pursued. No work on the culinary art offers itself as more than a counsellor. It informs the cook what he or she should do if she would bake successful bread; but it cannot knead the dough for her: that is an incommunicable art. 'The Novelist's Cook-Book' would profess to do no more for the young fiction writer. It would give him his rules, but it could not guide his pen. All arts have their mysteries—novel writing, I fear, has rather more than most of them,—and practice can never give much more

than the sense that they exist. Alone, it never took any one into the penetralia. But it has done some wondrous things short of that. Several hundred thousand women in these States have learned to make rather good bad bread by assiduous study of cook-books and indefatigable pummelling of dough. They will never make triumphantly good bread: one must be born with the instinct for doing that. And no one but a man of immense talent can produce a masterpiece of fiction. 'The Novelist's Cook-Book' would only enable the youth who is predestined to write bad novels to turn out an article not quite so bad as he would otherwise produce.

NEW YORK, March 3, 1884.

CHARLES W. BALESTIER.

An Anecdote of Longfellow.

FOR THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE :

MR. LONGFELLOW was more sensitive to criticism than many persons supposed. His attempts to hide his chagrin at some unexpected remark that reflected upon him were often futile. Not many weeks before his death I broached the subject of publishing a magazine which should contain things in which he would himself be specially interested, but unintentionally omitted a matter which the quick eye of the poet saw readily. In a pleasant letter to me a few days before his death, he pointed out to me my mistake, frankly stating that were such a paper published he himself would wish to be its editor. But it was not often that any visitor to his home in Cambridge ruffled his temper, or felt hurt at any chance remark. An anecdote, however, which has never been published, I believe, concerning the deceased poet, has to do with two young Englishmen who were on a visit to this country, and naturally wished to see all the 'sights.' They were bold young fellows, brainless, or nearly so, much given to unfavorable criticism of the manners and people of this country. They were wine and dined by their New York friends, and other friends met them in Boston and paid them much attention—perhaps more than they deserved. At all events, a trip to Mr. Longfellow's home at Cambridge was proposed, and eagerly undertaken. On the way over, the trans-Atlantic visitors found considerable fault with the river Charles, calling it a 'beastly stream,' 'devoid of beauty,' etc. On arriving at their journey's end, they were cordially welcomed by the poet himself, who appeared much interested in all they had seen, and asked them many questions about England, where he had not been for several years. They answered his queries civilly enough, though not without displaying profound ignorance on certain subjects. Finally, the conversation drifted to matters historical and otherwise, in this country. 'Yes,' said the taller of the two visitors, with an accent peculiarly British, 'we've seen all your old monuments, including that beastly Bunker Hill, and so we thought we'd pay our respects to you before going back to England.' Mr. Longfellow remained silent for a moment, then said, with a peculiar twinkle in his eye: 'And do I compare favorably with them?'

BOSTON, MASS., Feb. 23, 1884.

HENRY W. MORAY.

The Grolier Club.

WITHIN the past month there has been formed in this city a club named in honor of Jean Grolier de Servier,—courtier, bibliophile and collector,—whose aim, as set forth in its constitution, is 'the literary study and promotion of the arts pertaining to the production of books.' The Club does not propose to consider the commercial but rather the æsthetic aspects of book-making. Its prospectus outlines its general plan:

(1) Under the auspices of the Club, books are to be published in limited editions that in contents will bear, as a rule, upon phases of 'the arts entering into the production of books'—such as treatises on book binding, printing, engraving, etching, lithography, and paper-making. These books also are to be issued as models of construction, and, in being followed as guides, are intended to be of practical value in the advancement of art. (2) For non-resident members, some convenient system will be arranged shortly by means of which specimens of book-making may be circulated through the mail and returned eventually to the Librarian of the Club. (3) At the regular meetings of the Club, which will be held at least once a month, it is proposed to have always some form of special entertainment provided. This will be in charge of committees who, as occasion offers, will invite importers of French, German, English and other art books to send to the Club specimens of the most important works of the month, to be discussed upon their merits as examples of book-making without regard to their letterpress, except so far as

it relates to the appropriateness of the form, binding, and general manufacture."

The Club, whose membership is limited to fifty, includes, at the present date, Messrs. W. W. Appleton, Edward S. Mead, Henry Harper, Wm. Matthews, Robert Hoe, Jr., Leroy Yale, Hamilton Cole, Brayton Ives, Francis Lathrop, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Bayard Tuckerman, Louis Prang, Theo. L. De Vinne, Arthur B. Turnure, Walter Gilliss, Geo. H. Mifflin, Albert Gallup, A. W. Drake, S. W. Marvin, and George Dodge. At the first meeting, held on March 7, the following officers were elected: Robert Hoe, Jr., President; Brayton Ives, Vice-President; Albert Gallup, Treasurer; Arthur B. Turnure, Secretary; A. W. Drake, Librarian; Messrs. De Vinne, Marvin, and Turnure, House Committee; Messrs. Wm. L. Andrews, Theodore L. De Vinne, A. W. Drake, Albert Gallup, Robert Hoe, Jr., Brayton Ives, S. W. Marvin, Edward L. Mead, and Arthur B. Turnure, Council. Communications may be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. Arthur B. Turnure, 12 East Thirty-sixth Street, New York.

Those to whom Grolier is but a name will find an interesting article by Miss Charlotte Adams, giving a sketch of his life and of his famous library, in *The Art Age* for March.

The Lounger

I COULD devote all the space allowed me this week to the interesting old books Mr. George J. Coombes has just brought back with him from Europe. There are here first editions that I did not suppose could be wrested from the clutches of European collectors. For example, I find, in three tiny volumes, the first editions of Corneille (1644-48-52); a first edition of Coquillart's poems—a small octavo volume, no larger than an ordinary pocketbook but worth \$1000 (much more than the contents of many pocketbooks I know of); and an even smaller original edition (1533) of 'Master Pathelin'—the first comedy printed in the French language. And then there is the first edition of Spenser's 'Fairie Queen' (1590-96). Coming down to more modern times, my attention was held by a unique copy of 'Daphne and Chloe,' presented by Didot, the famous publisher, to Marshal Junot, who was evidently one of his best customers. It is a large folio, printed on vellum, and contains the original designs of Prudhom and Gerard. After Junot's death his accomplished wife, Mme. d'Abrantes, needed money and sold the book for \$345, which was all but giving it away. It was last sold at the Beckford-Hamilton sale for over \$5,000. I have not the exact figures by me, but those who know how prized are Prudhom and Gerard's drawings know that it was a cheap work even at that price.

I SPENT a pleasant two hours in looking over the first editions of Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning and Dickens, which are so rarely found nowadays. In the Dickens collection I found Forster's Life, with an autograph letter, in the familiar blue ink, inserted. It was written by Dickens to his solicitor, Mr. Frederick Ouvrey, the owner of the much-discussed collection now in Mr. Bouton's possession, and is dated 'Springfield, Mass., March twenty-first, 1868.' Most of this letter is quoted in Forster's Life, but the following paragraph was omitted:

'You may suppose, therefore, that the expenses are very great; nevertheless, unless the Impeachment excitement should at all interfere with the Boston and New York Farewells, I hope to turn £20,000 of clear profit, after having all charges, including Dolby's ten per cent on the receipts, and the conversion of greenbacks into gold at a considerable premium. Not so bad, I think??'

ANOTHER book with an autograph on the flyleaf is the first edition (1833) of Hartley Coleridge's Poems, formerly the property of his sister Sarah. The MS. is a heretofore unpublished sonnet by Hartley Coleridge, 'To Henry Nelson Coleridge,' which I am permitted to quote.

'Kinsman,—yea, more than kinsman, brother, friend—
O more than kinsman, more than Friend or Brother,
My sister's spouse, son to my widowed mother,
How shall I praise thee right and not offend?
For thou wert sent a sore heart-ill to mend:
Twin stars were ye—thou and thy wedded Love,
Benign of aspect as those twins of Love,
In antique Faith commissioned to portend
To sad sea-wand'ers peace,—or like the tree
By Moses cast into the bitter pool,
Which made the tear-salt water fresh and cool,
Or even as Spring which set the boon earth free,

Free to be good, exempt from Winter's rule—
Such hast thou been to our poor family.

In Sarah Coleridge's handwriting on another flyleaf, over the signature S. C., is the line: 'Dearest mother read often in this book during the last years of her life, the summer and autumn of 1845.' The book is beautifully bound by the late Riviere, the brother of Mme. Anna Bishop.

THE assertion of the author of 'The Breadwinners' that it would hurt him among his business associates to be known as the author of a novel, has been vigorously pooh-poohed by the press throughout the country. The pooh-poohers, as well as literary people generally, seem to forget that writing is looked upon by the great mass of business men as a dilettante way of earning a living. Lawyers, doctors, bankers, and clergymen who have dropped into literature can tell many an amusing story of the low estimate of their professional ability formed by their associates on account of this pleasant digression. Mr. Richard H. Dana told a friend of mine that when he published 'Two Years Before the Mast,' one of his associates in the law called upon his father and begged him to dissuade his son from purely literary writing. Legal writing was, of course, a different thing. And when Mr. Dana was nominated for a foreign mission, Simon Cameron arose in the Senate and protested against the appointment of any of 'them d—d literary fellers.' There was great excitement and indignation in his church when the late Rev. W. M. Baker became known as a novelist. 'J. S. of Dale' writes under that *nom de plume* entirely out of respect to the prejudices of his associates at the bar. Many persons, indeed, have an idea that writers are an unpractical class, and it shakes their faith in his legal knowledge and acumen, to find that their family solicitor pens sonnets to the inconstant moon.

A CHICAGO publisher, in advertising a book entitled 'Sketches of English and American Litterateurs,' recommends this 'very useful work' as containing, beside the usual biographic information regarding an author, mention of 'his family connections, whether good or bad; his career in life, whether moral or immoral.' Any reflecting mind can see the advantage to result from this exhaustive style of biography. Surely, when it is understood by the 'family connections' of a 'litterateur' that the light of investigation is thrown upon them also, they cannot remain indifferent as to their own conduct: if 'good,' these 'connections' will receive extra stimulus to continue in the path of well-doing; if 'bad,' through fear of disclosure they will be checked in their evil courses. The 'litterateur' should seriously consider this important condition in the problem of his success and good fame. He should remember that duty to himself is paramount; and, setting aside all trivial claims of consanguinity, he should, in case he has a relative who does not reflect credit upon him, systematically cut that relative's acquaintance. It were a pity that any young author's otherwise bright prospects should be clouded by the depraved conduct of a brother, a grandfather, or a Welsh uncle. Against the day of biographical reckoning, every man of letters should endeavor to secure the choicest 'family connections.' This may be done by judiciously selecting and eliminating.

The Editorship of The London "Times."

[From *The Spectator*.]

THE death of Mr. Chenery is at least as important as that of any ordinary Cabinet Minister, for it leaves vacant the Editorship of the *Times*; and the *Times*, in spite of the radical change which has passed over the Press, and over its own special position, is still an institution. Not that Mr. Chenery filled the post particularly well, for in spite of the generous testimony borne to him in the *Times* itself, he was only an average editor, by no means up to the level of Barnes, or Sterling, or John Delane. The Editorial chair was not, in fact, Mr. Chenery's fitting place in the world. He was an accomplished Professor or wide-minded savant, rather than a journalist. He was a scholar of unusually thorough learning in Arabic, and its most important dialect, Hebrew,—writing Hebrew, for example, with idiomatic force; he knew that little-known subject, modern Hebrew literature, excellently well; he spoke two or three European tongues with ease, and he had a keen interest in all that appertains to the study of the East. He had, too, seen much of men and manners, had travelled in many countries, and, when interested, could throw himself with vigor into many important political questions.

But, like most Orientalists, he had a difficulty in interesting himself deeply in things outside his specialty, he did not sincerely care for daily politics, and he lacked in an unusual degree insight into the movements of the English mind. He said in conversation three weeks before the election of 1880 that the return of a Liberal Government to power within twelve or fifteen years was almost an impossibility, and that the distaste for Lord Beaconsfield's Government, 'in many respects well founded,' was almost confined to the literary class. He was repeatedly wrong as to the English mind about Ireland, and was, to quote a recent instance, entirely at sea as to ordinary English opinion on the Ilbert Bill. He is said to have chosen men well, or at least carefully, and he certainly made them friends; but the *Times* under his management failed in interestingness, and often lacked its old tone of haughty decision. Judging as outsiders compelled every day to read, and not merely to skim the *Times*, we should say that Mr. Chenery had a weakness for consistency most injurious in his special position, and that he had a nearly total inability to perceive what Englishmen would like best to read about. He gave his audience constantly two articles, and sometimes three, in a morning's issue, which were, in fact, padding, sometimes good, sometimes bad, but always about trivial or unimportant subjects. That may have been judicious, for what we know, as a bit of newspaper management, and certainly it was in accordance with the precedents set by the penny papers; but it made of the *Times* something different from the old, strong-tongued leader of opinion, which left nothing untouched, and tried every day, successfully or otherwise, to tell everybody what for that morning he ought, if he were not an idiot, to think. The paper became too much like every other, till the old nicknames that its enemies threw at it, 'the Thunderer,' 'Jupiter Tonans,' and 'the Oracle,' became so ludicrously inappropriate that they were disused. The *Times* is quoted now as 'the *Times*,' just as the *Standard* and the *Daily News* are, and not as the national voice.

Mr. Chenery had little power of representation, but we do not know that this was his fault, or that any successor in his chair will ever again fully possess it. A great change has passed over the position of the *Times*, and it will be most difficult—if we uttered our real opinion, we should say it would be impossible—for the Walter family ever again to discover, what they have discovered so often, a man who could represent the ruling opinion of the hour with a brool as loud as its own. The first Walter did that, Barnes did that, Sterling did that, and so did Delane; but it was under a set of circumstances, always partly accidental, which have entirely passed away. While the constituency of the *Times*—that is, the well-to-do class taken as a whole—ruled the Ten-pounders, and through them the kingdom, it was possible for the *Times*, if its conductor could reflect the opinion of that class, to utter the opinion in a regal tone, as the opinion at once of its readers and of the country. There was nothing ludicrous or even over-strained in the majesty of the tone, for the utterance, whatever its other merits, really was in an extraordinary degree that of the legal 'country,' which alone had power to act on its decisions. The United Kingdom was not governed by a democracy, but by a widely-spread oligarchy, and most of that oligarchy read the *Times*. All that had to be done was to gather the opinion rightly, and as all representative men were concentrated in London, this could be accomplished with comparative ease. Mr. Barnes or Mr. Delane talked to those men, or in many cases without talking to them knew how they would think, and made their collective voice roll out through the *Times* in a way which, though sometimes stagey, was usually effective, and not infrequently majestic. Many singular instances of the latter tone could be quoted from the *Times* of 1848. This, however, can never be done again. It is no longer possible to gather the opinion of the country from representative men or Clubs, and when, with slow patience and close watchfulness and great expenditure of time, it is gathered, it is no longer the opinion of the *Times*' constituency. The two powers have ceased to be identical—are, indeed, often in conflict—and the unlucky Editor, if he follows the old tradition, finds either that his roar does not represent his constituency, and that he is, therefore, losing his hold, or that the country will go the other way, in which case his roar seems unbekomingly loud. This has really happened, though the *Times* would probably not believe it, about the reduction of the franchise in Ireland. The *Times* thundered about that quite in the old way, and we have no doubt the Editor really thought he was expressing the opinion of the country. In reality, he was only expressing that of those who buy the *Times*, and as the country was the other way, the thunder which twenty years ago would not only have sounded real, but have been real, caused no more alarm than the thunder of a theatre, and seemed

even a little ridiculous. It could only be by chance that an Editor of the *Times* could ever again occupy the old position, and then, if he did, if he happened to understand both the old governing class and the new governing class, and they happened to agree, the chances are the Government would understand also, and there would be no use in thundering so loud.

The Editor of the *Times* can, of course, be still a representative man, and utter the opinion of the Middle-class, and it is well that he should do so. We have never been able to concur in the abuse lavished on the *Times* for its tergiversations, for its constituency is always going round; and there is no true reason why, if only the fact is openly admitted, a newspaper should not be the mirror, instead of the leader of a constituency. But then the Editor must avow himself representative of a class, and not of the legal nation; must leave off confusing Income-taxpayers with 'the country,' and must seek strength through something other than regality of mien. His post will be a difficult, perhaps even an impossible, one, for an Editor of the *Times* who did not understand the true 'country' would not guide the vessel aright; and yet if he did understand it, he would in his own consciousness, while fighting for the opinion of his own constituency, often be waging a perfectly hopeless war. To succeed, he would have to be a man who not only understood the Upper Hundred Thousand, and in the main sympathized with them, but also understood the people, and could bear to be beaten by them, and start afresh from their verdict, without fury and without loss of heart. He must be able to be the mouthpiece of a permanently unsuccessful party, without becoming a partisan and without growing gradually into a bitter cynic. He must, in fact, be a Whig who accepts English democracy, as he accepts the English climate, without liking or disliking it, as part of the condition of things, not to be altered or endured, but simply used in the best way that seems open. Plenty of men of that kind exist—the present Foreign Secretary, we should say, is one of them—but then they usually, if journalists, want to express their own opinions; and the Editor of the *Times* must represent the class which supports the *Times*, or transmute the paper altogether. The man who can so represent, yet understand the new 'country,' must have a pliable firmness, a freedom from crotchets, a strong sweetness of intellectual temper which are exceedingly rare, rarest of all in the kind of men who can hold together a difficult team, and retain interest in politics which never, or hardly ever, go their way. They are scarcely to be found in France or America, and even in England, where detachment of mind is more common, despite the hereditary experience of the Walter family, who have been now seeking diligently for such men for nearly a century, we doubt if they will find the search this time an easy one. It is one thing to accept such a post when you are paid in the pleasure of ruling, quite another when the only pleasure likely to come to you is that of having defended bravely for others what you knew beforehand to be an untenable position. The next Editor of the *Times*, if faithful to the old tradition of the paper, will have to represent an oligarchy, yet understand a democracy, and must seem to give that oligarchy a most influential voice. That is most difficult work, to which only men with a singular combination of qualities can be competent, and few such men exist in journalism.

Mr. Bryce, M.P., on American Affairs.

[From *The Pall Mall Gazette*.]

AMONG the many Englishmen who have visited the United States last autumn, Mr. James Bryce is one of the most distinguished. Few Englishmen who have travelled in the United States bring to the study of the social, industrial, and political development of the New World so cultured an intellect, and so much practical experience in the working of modern representative institutions. Mr. Bryce did not visit America for the first time last year, and the paper in which he embodied the result of his impressions during his visit in 1882 was rightly regarded on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the most suggestive and accurate surveys of the affairs of the great Western Republic that have been published of late years. During his recent tour across the Continent Mr. Bryce has studied with the keenest interest the various phases of American life, and the result is that he has come home a greater believer than ever in the destinies of the United States. His confidence in the political future of the great democratic experiment in the New World is confirmed. American politics, he thinks, are becoming purer, and the Republic is getting rid of many of the abuses and much of the corruption which prevailed in former years. The passing of the Civil Service Reform Bill was 'a terrible blow to the pessimists.' Of Communist agitation, such as Mr. George is promoting in this

country, he found no trace in America. How can we be Communists? say the Americans. In this country every one has something to lose. Farmers own their fields, artisans own their houses. It is a standing puzzle on the other side of the water how Mr. George can command so much attention in England, for that prophet is scarcely known in his own country. Mr. George, however, wields so vigorous a pen that even in America its influence is felt; although it is insufficient to popularize land nationalization, it does effective service in other ways. His pamphlet on Kearneyism in California, so far as mere writing is concerned, is one of the most effective pieces of work which Mr. Bryce came across in the States.

The chief element of danger which Mr. Bryce noticed in the social development of America was the growth of abnormally large fortunes and the excessive luxury resulting therefrom. This, however, was confined to a few of the large cities, and the mass of the Americans live in the country. Another evil, somewhat related to the last, was the excessive power of the great corporations; some States are run by the railways instead of the railways running for the benefit of the States. 'You must go to America,' said Mr. Bryce, 'to understand the strength of anti-monopolist feeling.' The feeling in favor of limiting the powers of railway and other great corporations is growing and likely to grow, but Mr. Bryce is not as sanguine as Mr. George as to the possibility of mending matters by placing the management of all railways in the hands of the Government. The enormous patronage thereby created would be too great for any Government to bear. Before dreaming of any such gigantic experiment it would be better to see how far Civil Service reform can be made a reality. One feature of American politics much impressed Mr. Bryce on account of its bearing on the political questions at home, and that was the effect which single-member constituencies had upon the character of their representatives. Personally, Mr. Bryce prefers single-member to double-member constituencies, and he is convinced that the system secures a greater variety of representation, and a fuller independence of choice for the electors, than one of a *scrutin de liste* in large constituencies. But this advantage was counterbalanced by the serious drawback that you could not get men of as high a standing to come forward for a ward as you could when the constituency included the whole of a large town, and that there was too strong a tendency in favor of local men and local interests. The Americans, however, show little desire to recast their electoral system. Even the agitation for the enfranchisement of women, the one electoral reform that is talked about in the States, makes little or no progress. The question in which most interest is taken in the States, as in the old country, is that of temperance reform. An immense variety of experiments are being tried in the various States, and as a net result Mr. Bryce is inclined to believe that the balance of American opinion is in favor of a high license system, with prohibition enforced only in localities where public feeling is strongly in favor of such a course. Mr. Bryce did not visit the State of Maine; but, like almost every other Englishman who visits the States, he has returned with the general impression that prohibition does not prohibit when an attempt is made to put it in operation over a wide extent of territory. By the high license system the number of public-houses is reduced to a minimum; a very heavy license duty is levied on each public-house which remains, and the result is that not only are the publicans bound over by a heavy penalty to refrain from violating the law, but each holder of the State-created monopoly becomes a keen amateur detective of unlicensed sellers.

The question of free trade is making steady progress in America, but Mr. Bryce does not anticipate that there will be any rapid progress in that direction. A step will be taken toward relaxing the severity of the protective tariff by the proposed tariff reform now under consideration, and the movement would go on until they gradually worked themselves free from protectionist fetters; nor is it altogether for our interest that the process should be accelerated. Mr. Bryce expresses a strong dissent from the commonplace English condemnation of American newspapers. While it is quite true that no American newspaper wields the influence possessed by the great London dailies, that is due rather to the enormous distances which separate the centres of population than to any lack of ability on the part of their conductors. There is no doubt a strong vein of flippancy in many of them, but there is also a great deal of talent, while the weekly editions of the best New York and Boston papers, and particularly of the *Boston Herald*, contain a larger mass of valuable and readable matter than any other journals in the world. Mr. Bryce spoke feelingly of the misfortune which has overtaken Mr. Villard, whose health has broken down and whose wealth has disappeared in the depression of the stocks of the great railroad

schemes with which his name is identified. 'Mr. Villard,' said Mr. Bryce, 'is a man not only of great abilities, but of a very high type of character, a man who has thought and cared much more about the development of the country than about his own personal interests. He has done vast things for the North-West and for Oregon, and now that it is known that he has lost his own property in endeavoring to save that of others who had invested by reason of their faith in him there has been a general expression in America of respect and sympathy for him.' Mr. Villard, we are glad to hear, intends to visit this country in the spring, if his health permits.

'There is one thing,' said Mr. Bryce, in concluding a very pleasant conversation, 'that is borne in upon the mind more and more every time I leave England and return to it, and that is the striking contrast between the great and imposing figure which England makes abroad and the paralysis which seems to afflict her in dealing with her difficulties at home. All over the world, wherever you go, you never escape the all-pervading presence of the energy of England. Europeans feel for her an unwilling, Americans a sympathetic, admiration. But at home, side by side with a general and gratifying improvement in the social and material condition of the masses of the people, there exist still uncured the foulest sores on the body politic. Here, for instance, is the housing of the poor in the slums of our great towns. Almost as bad is the condition of the peasantry in the west of Ireland and in some of the Scottish islands. Another scandal, although of a different kind, is the anomalous constitution of a representative Chamber which gives Liverpool fewer members than a couple of decaying villages in the south of England, and which it may cost us more than one general election to remove. But perhaps the most puzzling, the most inexplicable of all, is the strange acquiescence of the House of Commons in its own impotence. Probably there never was a Legislative Assembly in which there was so much work waiting to be done, and so many strong and capable men anxious to do it, that suffered itself to be paralyzed by the loquacity of the least important of its members. The machine wants to be screwed up all round.' And with that pregnant saying Mr. Bryce departed to overtake the arrears of work that have accumulated during his absence beyond the sea.

Current Criticism

GEORGE ELIOT'S ESSAYS:—These essays will not add to the reputation of their author. Reprinted chiefly from *The Westminster Review*, it would be difficult to say that they stand prominently above the general average of such essays. Each of the quarterlies has created for itself a type, and these reviews are of the type familiar to us in such writers as the late W. R. Greg. They date from the period before Mr. Matthew Arnold had imported the method of Sainte-Beuve into English criticism, and in consequence they suffer by comparison with later work of a more subtle and artistic character. George Eliot's essays have not sufficient individuality to deserve new life for their own sake; on the other hand, they throw valuable light on certain problems connected with her art, and on this account merit republication.—*The Athenæum*.

MR. WHITE TO MR. DOWDEN:—When he scoffs and pleasantly gibes at me for saying that, in deciding what passages of Shakspeare need explanation to make them intelligible to readers of average intelligence and information, I, 'following eminent example, took advice of my washerwoman, and girds at the highly cultivated washerwomen of American democracy, he seems to forget, what I thought no one would forget, that my eminent example was Molière. Let me add that the washerwoman in my case was a lady who, although an intelligent and appreciative reader of Shakspeare, capable of enjoying not only his poetry, but his humor, is entirely without literary pretensions or habits, and who was within reach, like Molière's trusted critic, whenever I was in doubt. I felt sure that when such a reader and when the correctors of the press (whom I asked to query every passage that they thought doubtful or obscure, and who helped me much in this way) agreed in thinking a passage perfectly clear, I might safely pass it over without troubling those who wished to enjoy Shakspeare with what I thought about it.—*Richard Grant White, in The Academy*.

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN AT HOME:—Sir Lepele Griffin is a man of forty-three, who looks ten years younger, tall and erect in figure, showing no sign of the sloping shoulders and round back of those whose life has been passed in clerical occupations. He wears an ordinary suit of tweed, and is not in the least tropical to look upon. Extremely courteous in manner, he speaks in short sentences with somewhat of the deliberation general among men in

the habit of dictating to a shorthand writer, and rolls his r's with the guttural intonation which has succeeded the old-fashioned languid drawl. Essentially a good-looking, well-bred man of the new school, he has nothing of the 'nabob' about him, either in appearance or manner. When not travelling in the immense district over which he practically exercises control, he finds plenty of work to do in the Indore Residency, both for himself and for his assistants, of whom the principal is Captain Robertson. Curiously enough, his staff is entirely composed of soldiers, Sir Lepel himself being the only genuine civilian at the Residency. Asking us to allow him to finish a despatch, he walks up and down the office, smoking a cheroot and dictating to a shorthand writer. Sir Lepel rarely puts pen to paper, except to sign his name and to write articles for *The Fortnightly Review*, which he confesses himself unable to dictate like the straightforward narrative which comprises the bulk of official reports.—*The London World*.

WOMEN NOT SPOILED BY PRAISE:—Much has been said about the danger of woman being puffed up by public labors. I never could see why a godly woman giving herself to seek the salvation of the people should be charged with ambition or vanity any more than a man. One would think that pride and conceit were sins peculiar to the female sex, and that men were so pre-eminently meek and humble that they had it as their special call to keep the women so! Alas, facts are in the teeth of such a supposition. There are, doubtless, exceptions, but, so far from finding that our women get elated and vain, as a rule the danger is all on the other side. The hard work of struggling night after night and Sabbath after Sabbath with great crowds of rough people in the open air and in our halls; the opposition from roughs set on and bribed by publicans, and sometimes by those termed 'respectable people'; the contempt of religionists; the claims of a large corps in spiritual supervision, visitation, etc., combine often to produce exhaustion, discouragement, and the temptation to give in—so very different is the task itself from the idea which our critics form of it, which seems to be that of a performance or a piece of display.—*Mrs. Gen. Booth in The Pall Mall Gazette*.

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL AT ATHENS:—Study of the kind that a School of Classical Studies at Athens would promote is needed in England certainly no less than in America. A beginning has been made by the spirit which Dr. Waldstein and his fellow-workers have infused into the two Greek plays at Cambridge, and there are a number of the younger professors who are doing their best to lead students to regard grammatical study as merely the key to a door beyond which lie the objects of their search. But there is need of general conviction and unanimous action upon this point, and the establishment of facilities for English students in Greece itself would do more than anything else to bring these about. The success of our own scheme is probably assured by the efforts of the influential committee of which Mr. Escott is the secretary, and we wish Professor Goodwin and his committee a speedy and generous response to their appeals. 'Why is it,' he asks, 'that the magnificent frieze of Pergamon now adorns the Royal Museum of Berlin, and not the public Museum of New York, Boston, or Philadelphia?' In a matter where there is so much national honor to be obtained, it ought not to be difficult to raise twenty-four thousand pounds from the enormous private wealth and overflowing public revenues of America. We would suggest in certain quarters that the plan affords a more legitimate employment for superfluous American capital than the buying-up of Scotch deer-forests or English newspapers.—*The Spectator*.

DECEIVING THE ELECT:—It is said that M. Edouard D taille, the eminent war-painter, was lately struck by seeing a water-color drawing of his own in a shop window day after day as he went to his studio. Sometimes it would disappear for a day or two, but it would always reappear. At last, unable to bear this irritating apparition any longer, he burst brusquely into the shop one morning, and said: 'Since you can't persuade anybody to buy that drawing, I will buy it myself.' 'Oh but, sir,' they replied, 'it is having a very large sale.' 'What do you mean?' said the painter. 'How can a water-color drawing have a large sale?' 'It is the Goupil facsimile of your drawing, sir; and when he examined it closely in his hands he found that it really was the facsimile. When it is possible thus to deceive even the very elect, the errors of the poor art-critics should be more leniently dealt with.—*The Saturday Review*.

A SCOURGER SCOURGED:—Mrs. Lynn Linton would have been better advised if she had left her 'social essays' in the kindly obscurity of the back numbers of the *Saturday Review*, in which they originally appeared. There is no doubt that

some of them were a great success at the time. The 'Girl of the Period' created a sensation, and the world was all agog to know who was the author. But disquisitions which were readable enough when you got one of them at a time, as an assistance in killing ennui, cease to be readable when disinterred from their tomb long afterward, and ranged in rows like the dead monks in the Maltese convent. . . . The only object in view seems to be satire, but it is satire shouted at the top of the voice; and though there is a glimpse of a moral purpose, the morality is of the same kind as Juvenal's, which takes delight in the sins which it pretends to lash. If, like Juvenal, Mrs. Linton's efforts are inspired by indignation, it is to be feared that the indignation partakes rather of personal dislike than moral enthusiasm. Perhaps the most unpleasant characteristic of these effusions, as coming from a woman, is the contempt they exhibit for a great portion of her sex.—*The Spectator*.

Notes

The American Monthly is the result of an attempt to meet Chicago's demand for 'a literary magazine equal to the best published East.' The first number is, we believe, ready for delivery to-day. Its projector, Mr. J. Thompson Gill, has an abiding faith in 'the growing intelligence of Chicago and the West,' and his confidence in the extent and quality of their enlightenment emboldens him to announce that 'nothing of a crude or trashy nature will be published' in the nascent monthly.

'Margaret Fuller,' by Col. T. W. Higginson, will be the next volume in the American Men-of-Letters Series,—on the principle, we suppose, that there is no sex in literature.

'A May Idyll of the Olden Time' is to be the leading article in *Harper's Monthly* for May. Mr. Howard Pyle is not only the author but the illustrator of the article, and one of his three full-page illustrations of the text will be used as the frontispiece of the number. Another article to appear in the May *Harper's*,—a more important one, politically considered,—is a paper on Kaiser Wilhelm, by Dr. Moritz Busch, author of the famous book on Bismarck. It is said to contain the clearest explanation ever made of the Emperor's position in relation to the German people and the German Constitution.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have in press, for early publication, a volume of 'Studies in History,' by Henry Cabot Lodge, all of which have appeared in the leading magazines and reviews of this country.

Balzac has been made the subject of careful study by Mr. Edgar E. Saltus, of New York, and a little volume containing the results of his studies will soon be published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Arthur Gilman's popular 'History of the American People' has already reached its fourth edition.

Blanchard Jerrold, the well-known journalist and author, and eldest son of the late Douglas Jerrold, is dead, at the age of fifty-eight. He wrote a great many books, was a diligent contributor to almost all the leading London papers, and had the pleasure of seeing on the stage several comedies of his own production, to say nothing of the farce, 'cool as a cucumber.'

Dr. Heber Newton is still confined to a dark room, and does not know when he shall be able to use his eyes again.

Judge Neilson, of Brooklyn, popularly known from his connection with the Beecher trial, has written a book, which will soon be published, entitled 'Memories of Rufus Choate.' The volume includes letters from several eminent people in various professions, who, in response to Judge Neilson's request, have written their impressions and recollections of Mr. Choate.

The next volume in the admirable American Statesmen Series will be on John Adams. It is by Mr. John T. Morse, Jr. editor of the series, and author of the Lives of John Quincy Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

At a general meeting of the Military Service Institution at Governor's Island on Thursday last, Gen. O. B. Willcox read a paper on 'Outposts of Large Armies—Illustrated by Saarbr cken and Weissenberg.'

F. J. Furnivall has been granted a small pension on the English Civil Service list—a well-deserved reward for literary services. Mr. Furnivall was the associate, and afterward, the successor, of Mr. Herbert Coleridge, the first general editor of the Philological Society's Dictionary, of which the first part has just appeared. His researches have been chiefly confined to the department of Early English literature. He is, however, a shining light of the Browning Society.

Messrs. Appleton are about to publish a work on 'The Relation of Animal Diseases to the Public Health, and their Prevention,' by Frank S. Billings, V. S. Boston. The trichinosis question, now a subject of Congressional investigation, is fully discussed by the author, whose researches on this subject have been thorough and long continued.

Le Livre, the admirable literary review published by Quantin, of Paris, will for the future have an English home, Mr. Unwin, of Paternoster-square, having undertaken to issue it in London on the 12th of each month. Mr. Bouton has long been the American agent of *Le Livre*.

Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney publishes in the April *Wide Awake* 'Two Open Letters,' recounting her comical experiences with the subscribers for that bright magazine for the young who had read her serial, 'Buttered Crusts,' in its pages, and who immediately besieged her for the recipe to make soap-bubbles like those made at Thankful Holmes's famous Soap-bubble Party.

We have received the report of the Quarter-Centennial meeting of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society of New York, and the report to the New York Legislature of the Commission to Select and Locate Lands for Public Parks in the 23d and 24th Wards of this city.

A well-known Italian magazine involves the Queen in a new literary imbroglio, ascribing to her pen 'Victoria, Queen of England: Her Girlhood, and Womanhood,' dedicated 'al suo fedel servo, John Brown.' Her *nom de plume* is Grace Greenwood!

At a special meeting of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society held March 1st, 1884, the following resolution was adopted: 'That the evidence elicited during the course of the late trial has but heightened the favorable opinion we have always entertained respecting our fellow-member Mr. Gaston L. Feuerdent, and has strengthened our confidence in his ability as an expert, his integrity of purpose, and his unselfish devotion to the truth; and we hereby express the belief that as a knowledge of art and archaeology is more widely disseminated in this country, the views held by him, in common with every archaeologist of any repute in Europe, respecting the treatment of antique objects will be accepted here as the only correct views, alike by scholars and by those who shall have such objects in their custody.

Matthew Arnold's paper on 'Literature and Science,' which will appear in *The Manhattan* for April, has some of the matter contained in the lecture with that title which he has delivered in the United States, but differs from it in important respects. It has some sharp thrusts at those who clamor for a 'practical' education for youth.

Since the newspapers criticise the magazines, it is but fair that the magazines should criticise the newspapers. In *The Manhattan* for April, E. V. Smalley will give his view of 'Recent Tendencies of American Journalism,' pointing out what, in his opinion, has been the effect of the reduction in the price of leading journals.

The April *Century* contains two architectural papers, one on the New York City Hall and another on the White House,—the latter more descriptive of the interior of the building, which has been recently decorated by Mr. Louis C. Tiffany and his associate artists. In the May *Century* will begin Mrs. Van Rensselaer's articles on the present movement in American architecture, which are to be rich in illustration of both public and private buildings, churches, college buildings, railroad stations, stores, city and country houses, etc.

The Lives of Lucretia Mott and her husband, James Mott, have been written by her granddaughter, Mrs. R. P. Hallowell. The volume containing them will be published in a few weeks.

The Report of Prof. W. W. Goodwin and Mr. T. W. Ludlow on the American School of Classical Studies at Athens for the past year deserves the careful consideration of every lover of the higher learning in this country. It shows that the School is now an assured success and is in the way of accomplishing great good by opening an avenue to new fields of Greek study, new archaeological investigations, and new discoveries. It needs, and should have, a permanent Director and an endowment fund of \$120,000 to make it an enduring monument to the enlightened interest in matters of antiquity now shown by so many Americans. Its establishment is a silent but eloquent protest against the ignoble cry of the pre-Adamites, who would practically banish Greek from their gates, and yet would have them the Gates Beautiful. Can there be a Parthenon without the Propylæa?

The prizes recently offered by *St. Nicholas*, for the best original illustrations by young artists under seventeen years of age, brought more than nine hundred pictures under the notice of the judges. The names of winners and reproductions of the successful drawings will appear in the April number.

Oscar Fay Adams, who published recently a 'Handbook of English Authors,' has prepared a similar 'Handbook of American Authors,' which will be published shortly by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Ploetz's Epitome of Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern History has been translated by Wm. H. Tillinghast, of Harvard, who has made extensive additions and furnished the book with a very full index of over fifty pages. It will soon be published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

'A Sylvan City' is a compilation of pleasant facts, not altogether statistical, about Philadelphia, reprinted by Our Continent Publishing Co. from the pages of *The Continent*. The articles have been prepared by different writers, mainly by Helen Campbell and Louise Stockton, and include chapters on William Penn, the Post-Office, the schools, the shop-windows, the early Abolitionists, the medical schools, Stephen Girard, etc., and they contain matter to interest not only Philadelphians but all Americans, and all interested in America. The illustrations are particularly good.

Johns Hopkins University has added an archaeological society to its many special features.

While we have been laughing over his last book, Mr. R. L. Stevenson has been very near to death. He was at Nice, but has been removed and is getting better.

Mr. Andrew Lang has a volume in preparation containing his articles on folklore and savage mythology.

A bound volume containing nineteen autograph letters written by Byron to his mother during the years 1809-11, was sold recently in London for £283 10s. It was purchased for America, says *The Academy*.

We venture to prophesy for Mr. Augustin Daly's Comedy Company a most successful visit to London. We can think of no other theatrical organization we would rather have represent us in the old world. Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Rehan, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Drew and Mr. Leclercq are bound to please, not by any so-called 'Americanisms,' but by their proficiency in the art of acting.

The death of Charles Stuart Calverley will be regretted by all who are fond of humorous verses. He was best known here by his 'Fly-Leaves.' One of his most amusing poems was 'The Cuckoo Clock,' published originally in *Scribner's Monthly*.

Mr. E. W. Gosse is editing Sir Joshua Reynolds's speeches for the Parchment Library.

Dr. Westland Marston has succeeded Mr. Joseph Knight as London correspondent of *Le Livre*.

Mark Twain, whose 'Gilded Age' has been so great a success, proposes to try his luck with another play. His dramatization of his own book, 'The Prince and the Pauper,' will be produced before long.

The sale of the Murphy Library was brought to a close on Saturday night last at Clinton Hall. It had occupied the afternoons and evenings of six days, and when Auctioneer Merry called the last title he was so hoarse that he could scarcely speak. There were about 5,000 books sold and the total receipts from the sale reached \$51,559.63. This shows a very good average, and proves that Americana is not so bad an investment after all. The highest price fetched for any one set of books was for the 'Jesuit Relations,' a fine edition in 41 volumes, which, after some lively bidding between Mr. Hannah of the Brooklyn Mercantile Library and Mr. Joseph Sabin, was knocked down to the latter for \$3000. Mr. J. Russell Bartlett, Mr. Sabin, and Mr. Brentano, the latter two being dealers, were, it is said, the heaviest buyers at this sale, which on the whole was most satisfactory in its results.

DURING the present month, and beginning with this number, specimen copies of THE CRITIC AND GOOD LITERATURE will be sent to every Congregational Minister in the United States. A similar effort to introduce the paper to this particular class of cultivated readers was made last year with gratifying success. This year, the publishers believe, the results will be even more satisfactory. At the end of the month, a special announcement will be made to those to whom these specimen copies have been sent.

The Free Parliament.

[Communications must be accompanied with the name and address of the correspondent, not necessarily for publication. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

QUESTIONS.

No. 624.—Who was the author, and what is the title, of the poem the last stanza of which is

For days and weeks I waited on
That wretched, wretched man.
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can?

SALADO, TEXAS.

[Dr. O. W. Holmes, 'The Height of the Ridiculous.']

A. R. C.

No. 625.—Who is the author of the following lines, and where do they occur?

A sense of an earnest will
To help the lowly living,
And a terrible heart thrill
If you have no power of giving
An arm of aid to the weak.
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind word so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless.
The world is wide; these things are small;
They may be nothing, but they may be all.

TURNER, OREGON.

WM. YOUNG.

No. 626.—1. What are the characteristics of true American poetry? Longfellow, it has been said, was no true American poet. 2. What is the meaning of 'Mississinewa'? 3. Has 'Paradise Lost' ever been translated into the German?

FORT RECOVERY, ORE.

J. H., Jr.

[L. Ask Walt Whitman. The fact that 'it has been said' that Longfellow was no true American poet in no wise disproves his right to the title.]

ANSWERS.

No. 559.—Milton's 'star-pointing.' I am glad that my brief note on this expression has been the means of drawing out Prof. Harrison's fuller statement of the matter in your paper of Feb. 16. I was not ignorant of the facts concerning the prefix *y*; but I have my doubts whether Milton was aware of the rare use of it with the present participle. It seems to me more likely that he simply took the liberty of transferring to that participle a prefix which he had seen used repeatedly with the past participle—a liberty which, so far as I am aware, no other poet of his time or since has ventured

to take. The reader may be interested in the comments of the leading editors on the word. Keightley (ed. of 1859, vol. I, p. 81) says: 'This term is incorrect, for it was only to the past participle that *y* (A.-S. *ge*) was prefixed.' Browne (Clarendon Press ed., vol. I, p. 252), in a note on *y*-chained in the 'Hymn on the Nativity,' 155, says: 'Here *y* is the prefix of the past participle; the *ge* of Anglo-Saxon and Modern German. It is wrongly used by Milton in the lines on Shakspeare, being there prefixed to a participle present.' Masson (Vol. III., p. 383) says: 'The word is hardly a correct formation, as the prefix *y* (German *ge*) belongs properly to the past participle passive, as in *yolad*, *yelopt*.'

A fuller and more accurate statement is to be found in Marsh's 'Lectures on the English Language,' p. 333, footnote: 'In Milton it [the prefix *y*] occurs but thrice, and in one of these three instances it is applied in a very unusual way. In the first printed of Milton's poetical compositions, the Epitaph on Shakspeare, we find the lines:

Or that his hallow'd relics should be hid
Under a star-pointing pyramid.

Here the syllabic augment *y* is prefixed to a present participle, a form of which there are very few examples, though *ilectide*, *y*-lasting, or permanent, occurs in the proclamation of King Henry III. referred to in a note on p. 322. The prefix is rarely applied to any but Saxon radicals, and thus *y*-pointing is a double departure from the English idiom. *Y*-pointed, indeed, is found in Robert of Gloucester, and it is possible that Milton wrote *y*-pointed, in which case the meaning would be "pointed (or surmounted) with a star" (like some of the Egyptian obelisks, which have received this decoration since they were transferred to Europe), instead of "pointing to the stars."

For myself, I prefer to believe that Milton wrote *y*-pointing, though without any thought, if indeed he had any knowledge, of the rare instances of similar present participles in earlier English.

CAMBRIDGEPORT, MASS., Feb. 21, 1884.

W. J. ROLFE.

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